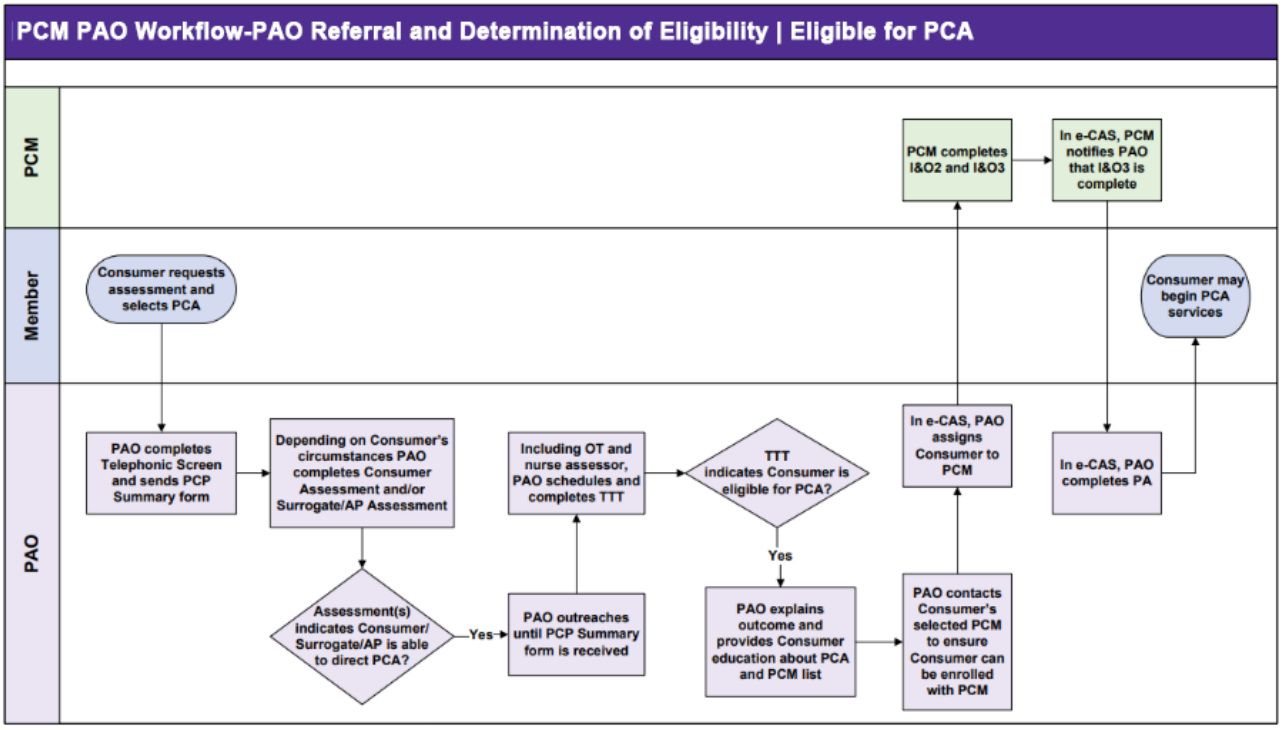
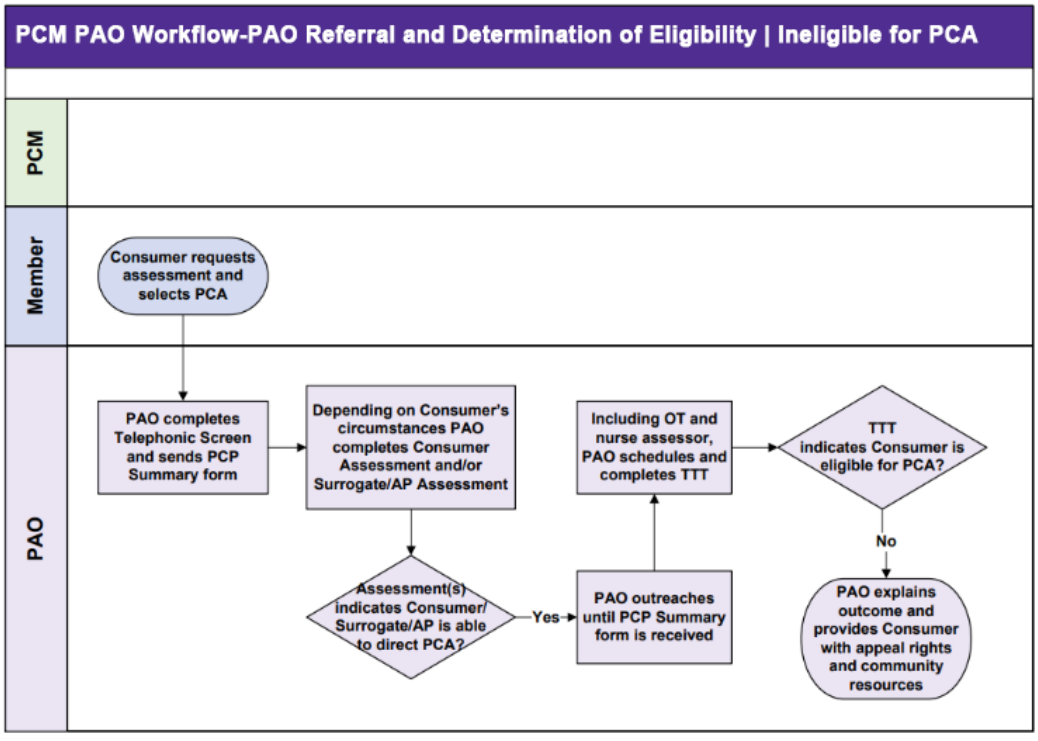
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
www.mass.gov/orgs/masshealth

Roles Guide: MassHealth Public Assessor Option (PAO) for Personal Care Management (PCM) Agencies

The PAO is a new option for Consumers seeking Personal Care Attendant (PCA) services to complete their initial clinical evaluation. Consumers still have the choice of having their preferred PCM agency complete their initial clinical evaluation.



**If the PAO finds that a Consumer needs a Surrogate, the PAO will assist the Consumer with identifying one.*



PAO Responsibilities

MassHealth Consumers enrolled in MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth who are **seeking PCA services have the option of having their Initial Clinical Assessment Initial Prior Authorization completed by the PAO.**

Consumers who are authorized for services through MassHealth's One Care, Senior Care Options (SCO), or Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) plans will be assessed through their plan.

When a Consumer contacts the PAO to request an assessment, the PAO will complete the Telephonic Screen and then proceed with Initial Clinical Assessment process.

Steps the PAO will take in completing the Initial Clinical Assessment Process include completing the Consumer and/or Surrogate/Administrative Proxy (AP) Assessment, obtaining PCP documentation, completing the Time for Task Tool (TTT), and submitting the prior authorization (PA).

Consumer and/or Surrogate/Administrative Proxy (AP) Assessment

- The PAO will complete the Consumer Assessment and any Surrogate/AP assessments as applicable before proceeding with the assessment process. If it is determined that the Consumer cannot self-direct their PCA services and they do not have an identified Surrogate/AP able to direct PCA services on the Consumer's behalf, the PAO will not proceed with the assessment process and will inform the Consumer they are not able to proceed with PCA services without someone who can direct their PCA services.

Obtaining PCP Documentation

- The PAO will contact the Consumer's PCP to obtain the PCP Summary Form before scheduling the Time-for-Task Tool with the Consumer.

Time-for-Task Tool (TTT)

- The PAO will schedule the TTT as the Initial Clinical Assessment with the Consumer. The TTT will be completed by the PAO's nurse assessor and occupational therapist.
- The PAO will explain the evaluation outcome and next steps to the Consumer, including appeal options for Consumers determined to be ineligible.

- The PAO will provide unbiased information to Consumers and surrogates about PCM agencies so that that consumers can make an informed choice to select their preferred PCM agency.
- The PAO assigns the Consumer to the preferred PCM agency in e-CAS and sends an email to the PCM agency that a referral has been made to their agency.

Prior Authorization (PA)

- Once the PCM agency has completed Intake & Orientation (I&O) 2 and 3 and notified the PAO through e-CAS, the PAO is responsible for submitting the initial PA request in e-CAS.
- The PAO's submission in e-CAS will transmit to MMIS. There will be no additional adjudication as the PAO is a state entity.
- The PAO will notify the PCM agency when the PA has been submitted.

PCM Agency Staff Responsibilities

When a Consumer is found eligible for PCA services and selects their preferred PCM agency, the PCM agency will receive an email from the PAO notifying them that a referral has been made to their agency and will assign the Consumer to the PCM agency in e-CAS.

The PCM agency can then review the TTT and all associated documentation in e-CAS.

The PCM agency will complete I&O 2 and I&O 3 and notify the PAO that these activities have been completed so that the PAO can complete the PA.

Once notified by the PAO that the PA is complete, the PCM agency will then complete any remaining pre-admission activities.

Learn More

For more information about the PAO and how it supports PCA services, explore the resources available on the MassHealth LTSS PAO website, including an FAQ Guide for Providers: PCM.

Visit: https://masshealthltsspao.com/en/resources